

# 12 East African Englishes

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JOSEF SCHMIED

## 1 Introduction

This survey of East African English (EAfE) focuses on Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, which are often seen as the core of East Africa. The varieties of English used there are considered typical ESL varieties, part of the New Englishes and of Kachru's (1986) Outer Circle. The terminology depends more on ideological stance than on "linguistic facts": the "conservative" view emphasizes the common core and acknowledged "standards," the "progressive" view cherishes the diversity of actual usage and the cultural and linguistic innovations. This presentation tries to abstract from some well-known linguistic facts and to leave the interpretations to the readers, their language-political preferences, and attitudes (cf. Chapter 35, this volume).

Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania share a long, common "Anglophone" background, despite some interesting differences in colonial heritage. They are also characterized by a complex pattern of African first languages (mainly from the Bantu and Nilo-Saharan language families), a common lingua franca (Kiswahili), and a combination of Christian, Islamic and native African religious and cultural beliefs. The East African Community (1967–76, revived in 1997) is a sociopolitical expression of this common heritage.

The neighboring countries in the north – Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia – have also experienced some English influences, but they have had their own special histories as well as linguistic and cultural traditions, especially a much more independent development and – in large parts – a more dominant Arabic influence, so that they are usually not considered ESL nations in Kachru's sense. The southern "Anglophone" neighbors – Zambia, Malawi, and Zimbabwe – are often (cf. Schmied, 1996) considered as "Central Africa" or even part of "Southern Africa" since they have been under a dominant impact from the south (including its native speakers of English) for over a century. This influence is engrained in the pronunciation (e.g., the long central vowel tending towards [a.], like *girl* as [ga.l]) and the lexicon (e.g., the typical SAfE *robot* for *traffic light*).

Although many sociolinguistic and linguistic features can also be found in other parts of Africa, EAfE can be distinguished clearly enough from other Englishes and thus justifiably treated as a coherent descriptive entity. A realistic description can only be based on authentic data from the regions, exemplary quotations from individual recorded utterances, a quantified and stratified pattern retrieved from the relevant sections of the International Corpus of English (ICE-EA; cf. Chapter 41 this volume), or a qualified search using internet search engines (Schmied, 2005).

## **2 Review of the Literature**

The scholarly literature on EAfE is still scarce and patchy. There is no introductory volume like Spencer (1971) for West Africa (cf. Chapter 11, this volume). Although the Ford Foundation funded a big sociolinguistic survey of language in Eastern Africa in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the descriptive data published as a result (Polomé and Hill, 1980 for Tanzania; Whiteley, 1974 for Kenya; and Ladefoged, Glick, and Criper, 1971 for Uganda) are relatively limited, especially for English.

Of course, East Africa is covered in the standard surveys of English in Africa (Schmied, 1991a) or of English around the world (Hancock and Angogo in Bailey and Görlach, 1982; Abdulaziz in Cheshire, 1991; Schmied in Kortmann et al., 2004; and contributions in Kachru, 1992). These articles give a good introduction into the sociolinguistic background, including language policies and language attitudes. More detailed studies have been presented on various pronunciation features (Kanyoro, 1991; Schmied, 1991b). Although the availability of data has improved enormously over the last few years, through corpora or selected internet texts from radio stations as well as newspapers (Schmied and Hudson-Ettle, 1996), the systematic description of EAfE has only just started. There are some sophisticated data-based analyses on idiomaticity (Skandera, 2003), on subordination (Hudson-Ettle, 1998), and on prepositions (Mwangi, 2003), all based on the East African part of the International Corpus of English (see below). These corpus texts also come to life in a new text volume with corresponding interpretations (Schmied, forthcoming).

## **3 The Historical Background**

European languages came late to East Africa, as for a long time the colonialists were not particularly interested in this part of Africa; only the Swahili towns on the coast (Kilwa, Zanzibar, Mombasa, Malindi, etc.) were used as stepping stones to the center of the British Empire, India. The last decades of the nineteenth century saw the establishment of British and German colonial power, mainly via Zanzibar. The most famous East African explorers, Livingstone and Stanley (who met at Ujiji in 1871), were accompanied by other explorers

and various missionaries: Methodists opened a mission near Mombasa in 1862, Anglicans in Zanzibar in 1863, and Catholics in Bagamoyo in 1868. Ten years later, Christian missionaries moved along the traditional trading route inland through Morogoro and Tabora to Ujiji on Lake Tanganyika. This shows that European intrusion paradoxically followed the established Swahili traditions, including the use of their language, Kiswahili, as a lingua franca. Even the brief German colonial rule in the southern parts of East Africa (from Carl Peter's first "treaties" in 1884 to World War I) did not establish German but Kiswahili in the colony – and laid the foundation for the success of this truly national language in Tanzania later.

After WWI, some differences in colonial administration between Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika/Zanzibar can be attributed to the role of the white settlers in Kenya, but a lot of similarities remained, although Tanganyika was only held by the British as a Mandate from the League of Nations. The system of "indirect rule" through African leaders (developed by Lord Lugard in Nigeria) was introduced. In contrast to Rhodesia (especially in present-day Zimbabwe), where the settlers were given self-governance, the primacy of "African interests" was decided in 1923. This is documented in the Land Ordinance Act, which was to secure land rights for Africans and not only Europeans, although over 2000 "settlers" had spread across the country, particularly in the "White Highlands" north of Mount Kenya and east of Mount Elgon. In reality, British rule established a three-class system, with the white colonial officers and settlers at the top, the Indians in the middle, and the black Africans at the bottom.

A system of communication, education, and interethnic exchange developed along the railway and highway lines, with a few ethnic nuclei in fertile areas such as Buganda, Kikuyuland/Mount Kenya, or Chaggaland/Mount Kilimanjaro. The Indians had come to East Africa partly via the Swahili trade in Zanzibar, but mainly as indented laborers for the construction of the railways. They stayed not only in the (railway) administration but also as traders, with their small *dukas* (shops) in the centers, often as "middlemen," who were looked down on by the European settlers and accused of exploitation by the Africans.

Despite the unifying band of British colonial rule, colonial language policy was more complex than is often assumed, as colonial administrations tried to regulate official language use in their territories differently. This usually involved three types of language: the local "tribal" mother tongues, the African lingua franca (mainly Kiswahili, but also Luganda), and English, for local, "intraterritorial" and international communication, respectively. The churches also had an influence on status, attitudes, and usage, not only on church language but also on school language. Even the three British mission societies (the Universities Mission to Central Africa, the Church Mission Society, and the London Mission Society) did not use English for evangelization. Protestant missions in general favored the "language of the people," i.e., the ethnic languages, and also the African lingua franca Kiswahili. The Catholic church was

usually more orthodox, supporting not only Latin in its services but also Kiswahili in its preaching. English was established by the colonial rulers only in elitest circles when they tried to regulate communication within the administrative, legal, and education systems. This led to a basically trilingual language policy, with the ethnic “vernacular” for local communication and basic education, Kiswahili in ethnically mixed centers, and English for the highest functions in administration, law, and education.

## 4 The Sociolinguistic Setting

Today, White East African English is relatively insignificant, although the influence of the early British and South African settlers may have been considerable up to the 1950s. Thus, EAfE is Black African English; it is used “native-like” as the primary language in the home only by highly educated people in mixed marriages and can be described as a socio-educational continuum, since the type of English spoken by Africans depends largely on two factors: (1) their education, i.e., the length and degree of formal education in English; and (2) their social position, i.e., the necessity for and amount of English used in everyday life. Today, of course, English as the international language of science, technology, international development, and communication is also a learner language, but “broken” English or “school English” is usually looked down upon and ridiculed, especially in Kenya, for instance in literature or political campaigns.

Thus the East African Englishes show the characteristic features of New Englishes (cf. Hickey, 2004; Kachru, 1986; Platt, Weber, and Ho, 1984) in background, genesis, and function. This means they are not transmitted directly through native-speaker settlers (instead usage is shaped mainly through their use as media of instruction in school and reinforced outside school) and that they are used in public functions in the national administrative, educational, and legal systems. Interestingly enough though, the term New Englishes is rarely used in East Africa, probably because Standard English (StE), even with EAfE pronunciation or as an (hypothetical) independent East African Standard, is considered more appropriate.

The common cultural background of the three countries accounts for their similar sociolinguistic situation. The major difference is the status of Kiswahili: in Tanzania, it is the true national language, since it is spoken nationwide as a lingua franca, learned in a relatively homogeneous form (sometimes called “Government Swahili”) in all primary schools, and used for most national functions, including education in most secondary schools; in Kenya, it is more and more losing its historical connotations with the coast or with lower social positions; in Uganda, however, it is still associated with the military and the “troubled” times of the 1970s and 1980s. These circumstances leave more room for English and the other East African languages in Uganda and Kenya than in Tanzania.

The official status of English in government, parliament, or jurisdiction is not always easy to establish, as laws, regulations, and proclamations since independence over 40 years ago may contradict each other. Whereas English is clearly the language of nationwide politics in Uganda, it is rarely used in those functions in Tanzania; in Kenya, it occupies a middle position.

Knowledge and actual use of English are based on very rough estimates, since no nationwide census data are available and the last language survey was conducted more than 30 years ago. To say, for instance, that English is “spoken” by 30 percent of people in Uganda, 20 percent in Kenya, and only 5 percent in Tanzania may give an indication of the (historical) differences in education, urbanization, modernization, or internationalization, but such statements must be taken with great caution. Since English gives prestige, informants’ self-evaluations are unreliable, and results of nationwide proficiency tests for national certificates of education are often disappointing. The fact that universities have started extensive course programs in “Communication Skills” or even explicitly “Remedial English” reveals some of the problems. The discussions can be followed on the Internet, for example in numerous letters to the editors of major national newspapers. The key problem is that English is used as the language of instruction from upper primary school onward (in Uganda and partly in Kenya) and is thus the basis for all further education. The discussion is less about teaching English properly than teaching (other subjects) in English properly.

In all three countries, English is still a result and a symbol of good education and, directly or indirectly, a prerequisite for well-paid jobs with international links in trade and tourism. This is often reflected in popular debates on language attitudes in East Africa.

Attitudes toward EAfE forms are rarely discussed outside scholarly circles. Accepting African forms is hardly ever openly admitted, except regarding pronunciation, where “aping the British” is seen as highly unnatural. Grammar and syntax in particular are considered the glue that holds the diverging Englishes together; and international intelligibility is deemed absolutely essential. Thus, Standard English with African pronunciation may be accepted as an intranational norm, but Ugandan, Kenyan, or Tanzanian English grammar will not be tolerated, at least in the near future. The theoretical British norm in grammar is still upheld in books but rarely used or experienced in use in present-day East Africa (cf. Chapter 28 this volume).

## 5 Phonology

The features characterizing EAfE can be found at subphonemic, phonemic, and supraphonemic levels. The following description lists examples as well as general tendencies.

Differences at the phonemic level are important because here differences of lexical meaning are maintained. This can be illustrated (and elicited) in minimal pairs like *ram* and *lamb*, *beat* and *bit*, or *show* and *so*. Many Africans do

not distinguish clearly in pronunciation between the elements of such pairs, creating a considerable degree of homophony.

Among the consonants, /r/ and /l/ are a particularly infamous pair for many Bantu speakers, both rendered as one and the same, often as an intermediate sound between /loli/ and /rori/ instead of /lori/, for instance. In Kenya the pair is a clear subnational identifier, since even educated Kikuyu clearly tend toward /r/ and the neighboring Embu toward /l/. Occasionally, the sets of voiced and voiceless fricatives around the alveolar ridge /ʃ/, /ʒ/, and /s/, and /ʒ/, /z/, and /z/ are not distinguished clearly, either. Most of these deviations are registered by East Africans as subnational peculiarities. But even phoneme mergers do not endanger the consonant system as a whole, although they may be clearly noticeable. The following examples show three general tendencies for consonants:

- 1 The merger of /r/ and /l/ is widespread, but still ridiculed.
- 2 Intrusive or deleted (as a hypercorrect tendency) nasals, especially /n/ before plosives, are common, since some languages like Kikuyu have nasal consonants.
- 3 English fricatives are generally difficult but particular deviations often restricted to certain ethnic groups.

At the subphonemic level, which is not important for differences in meaning but gives spoken EAfE a particular coloring, an interesting consonant is /r/. As in many English varieties, /r/ is usually only articulated in pre-vocalic positions (i.e., EAfE is non-rhotic, not pronounced in *car*), and its pronunciation varies considerably (it may be rolled or flapped).

A comparison of the English phoneme system with that of most African languages shows that the major differences are not the consonants (although there are fewer consonant combinations), but the small number of vowel contrasts, compared to the extensive English vowel system. Overall, EAfE tends toward a basic five-vowel system. Thus, the vowel system of EAfE is systematically different from StE, vowels tend to merge because the range of the English vowel continuum is not covered by the underlying African systems of, for instance, the Bantu languages. On the whole, three basic generalizations may be made for EAfE vowels:

- 1 Length differences in vowels are leveled and not contrasted phonemically. This is not only a quantitative but also a qualitative shift, as short vowels in EAfrE are usually longer and more peripheral than in RP, especially /ɪ/ tends toward /i:/, /ʊ/ toward /u:/, /ɔ/ towards /o:/, and /ʌ/ and /æ/ toward /a/.
- 2 The central vowels /ʌ/, /ɜ:/, and /ə/, as in *but*, *bird*, and *a*, are avoided and tend toward half-open or open positions, /a/ and /e/.
- 3 Diphthongs tend to have only marginal status and to be monophthongized. In the diphthongs /eɪ/ and /aʊ/, the second element is hardly heard in many African Englishes (as in Scotland), thus they almost coincide with

the /e/ and /a/ phonemes. Diphthongs with a longer glide are preserved, but they are not really pronounced as falling diphthongs, i.e., with less emphasis on the second element than on the first, but rather as double monophthongs (e.g., /oɪ/, /aʊ/). All the centering diphthongs (/iə, eə, uə/) tend to be pronounced as opening diphthongs or double monophthongs (/ɪa, ea, ua/; cf. tendency V2).

Other important features of African English are supraphonemic, i.e., related to phoneme sequences, word stress, intonation, and general rhythmic patterns. Consonant clusters are a major phonotactic problem, as many African languages have relatively strict consonant-vowel syllable structures (often CV-CV-CV). Thus, English consonant clusters tend to be dissolved, either by dropping one or some of the consonants involved or by splitting them through the insertion of vowels.

Final consonants are dropped when there are two or more in a sequence, e.g., [neks] for *next* and [hen/han] for *hand*. But this tendency also occurs in native-speaker English, and its frequency in EAfE seems to vary a lot. The general rule appears to be that if plosives are preceded by fricatives, they are dropped in word-final position; if they are preceded by other plosives or occur in non-final position, they are split by vowels inserted between the consonants. Similarly, final vowels are added to closed syllables, i.e., [ɪ] or [ʊ] are inserted, depending on the occurrence of palatal or velar consonants in the environment (e.g., [hospɪtəlɪ] for *hospital* or [sprɪŋɪ] for *spring*), or on vowel harmony (e.g., in [buku] for *book*).

A particularly striking supraphonological feature is the African tendency toward regular stress rhythms. Again, this feature derives partly from the English tendency to maintain the Romance principle of word stress on the penultimate syllable, in contrast to the general Germanic principle of stressing the stem. This complexity leads to differences in word stress between etymologically obviously related words when prefixes and suffixes are added; thus, *ad'mire* is not stressed on the same syllable as *admi'ration* and '*admirable*'; East Africans are tempted to stress [ad'mairabl] and sometimes even [ad'maire'jen], just like [ad'maɪa].

The most noticeable feature of the speech flow in African Englishes is the tendency toward a stress-timed rather than a syllable-time rhythm. Thus, EAfE tends to give all syllables more or less equal stress and not "cram" up to three unstressed syllables together into one stress unit to create the so-called "weak" forms of Standard British English. This underlying pattern accounts for most of the suprasegmental patterns in EAfE mentioned above (e.g., giving too much articulatory precision to unstressed syllables), and its sometimes unfamiliar rhythm. These differences may cause misunderstandings in intercultural communication, when EAfE may be misjudged as unfriendly "machine-gun fire" or childish "sing-song." An interesting question is whether syllable-timed English may actually help in communication with Francophone Africans, whose speech is also syllable-timed.

## 6 Lexicon

The lexicon of EAfE comprises, of course, the core lexicon of StE and specific East Africanisms, which would not be interpreted easily or equally by the non-initiated, e.g., readers or listeners not familiar with English usage in East Africa (cf. Chapter 38 this volume). Despite some cultural, especially sociopolitical, differences among Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, the use of (Kiswahili) loans, the semantic extension of StE lexemes, and idiomatic flexibility are common features.

The geographical range of EAfE lexemes varies a lot. Very old borrowings, such as *askari*, *baobab*, *bwana*, and *safari* have already been incorporated into general English, and are thus codified in large dictionaries of English, the *Oxford English Dictionary* with its supplements, for instance. They have entered world Englishes, and some have even been integrated into other European languages. They are, however, restricted to African contexts, and thus have a more specific meaning in general English than in a particular regional English. The most widespread item is perhaps the Kiswahili word *safari*: for Europeans it denotes a "journey" to see and shoot game, in the old days with a gun, today with a camera, normally in National Parks; in EAfE, it retains its more general meaning.

As would be expected, the African environment is inadequately reflected in the StE lexicon, and is supplemented by African names for characteristic landscapes, plants or animals. African loans cluster around "African" domains just as English loans cluster around "European" domains. It is interesting to see that the semantic expansion of StE lexemes (cf. (3) in the list below) may create problems of distinction, as in the case of *potatoes*, where Africans often have to specify *Irish/European potatoes* or *sweet potatoes*. In general, the preferred staple food dish is hardly ever translated: Kenya's/Tanzania's *ugali* is the same as Uganda's *posho* (from the colonial English *portion*, which was allocated to workers), the traditional maize dish.

The field of food is probably culture-specific everywhere, but in many African countries there is a marked contrast between European and African food (and eating habits) because Europeans in East Africa have tended not to adopt African food, in contrast to the British in India. Some dishes are also marked by ethnicity or region, like *irio* and *githeri* for Kikuyu dishes or *vitumbua* for coastal rice-cakes. Some are of course clearly imported from Asia, e.g. *bajia* (an Indian potato dish) and *chai* (tea).

Many African words for kin relations in the intimate family and beyond are retained in EAfE, especially when used as a form of address. Where African clothing is still worn it is, of course, referred to with African language names. African customs have to be rendered in indigenous words (e.g., *lobola* 'bride-price'), and their uses are governed by local rules of politeness.

An important domain of Africanisms is politics. As African languages have often played a major role in mobilizing the masses, even before *uhuru* 'independence' was reached, *harambee* ('pulling together') was a national



slogan in Kenya, as were *ujamaa* ('familyhood') and *kujijetemea* ('self-reliance') in Tanzania. It is clear that most of these terms have to be seen in their specific sociopolitical context.

The borderline between code mixing (with two languages overlapping in a sentence or text) and (integrated) loan words can be blurred when, for instance, the Kiswahili locative or directive particle *-ni* is added to a word, as when an officer is *porini* (i.e., 'in the bush' – "up-country," away from the capital or administrative headquarters).

Even if the words used in African English are formally unchanged English words, their meanings may be quite different. Although word usage may depend on the specific linguistic and extralinguistic context, some tendencies can be observed:

- 1 The level of semantic redundancy tends to be higher in EastAfe than in StE. E.g., a *secret ballot* is considered a tautology ("secret" is semantically included in *ballot*, not in *vote*), *the reason why he came is because . . .* expresses the same meaning in the noun and the conjunct, and *perhaps* is redundant in the context of the modal *may*.
- 2 Idiomatic expressions are sometimes used in slightly different morphological forms. E.g., *with regards to* combines *with regard to* and *as regards*.
- 3 English word forms are used in other reference contexts (usually expanded). E.g., having many "brothers" and "sisters" or even "fathers" shows that kinship terms are expanded as reference and address terms; *mother* may refer to the adult female member of the nuclear family or to one of her co-wives or sisters, or any elderly woman from the same village without any blood relation to the speaker.
- 4 English word forms are confused with similar ones, thus meanings are often expanded. E.g., when *to book* is used like "to hire," *to forget* like "to lose," *to refuse* like "to deny," *to convince* like "to persuade," *to see* like "to look," *to reach* like "to arrive," *arm* like "hand," *guest* like "stranger," *strange* like "foreign," and so on.
- 5 English word forms are used in other contexts, thus having other collocations and connotations. E.g., fairly general terms are used instead of more specific ones (*an election is done* [cf. "conducted/held"] or *to commit an action* [cf. "crime"]).

However, as has been mentioned above, contexts and style choices constituting idiomaticity form a complex interplay, and this special flavor can only be studied in larger sections of authentic texts. A few examples of typical verb usage from the spoken part of ICE-EA must suffice here:

- (1) I am a matatu driver operating route No. 44 (ICE-EA: S1B065K)
- (2) It is the City Inspectorate who assigns the City Askari. (ICE-EA: S1B066K)
- (3) But he never saw anybody himself; nor anybody alighting from the police m/v go to the house. (ICE-EA: S1BCE07K)

For quantitative comparisons and sample retrievals Internet URLs with the domains .ug, .ke, and .tz can be used (cf. Schmied, 2005). Such a procedure using modern web browsers provides examples of rare cases much more easily nowadays, although the texts have to be evaluated critically, e.g., as to whether they can really be seen as “educated East African English.” Country-specific patterns can be distinguished, e.g., Kiswahili address forms like *ndugu* or *mzee* have higher frequencies in Tanzania than in Kenya, and *duka* and *fundu* are less frequent in Uganda, but *sodas* occur in all three East African countries, in contrast to *minerals*, which refer to the same drink in South Africa. *Mitumba* also occurs on .uk web sites, but usually with an explicit explanation in the form of premodifiers or appositions (*the second-hand mitumba* or *mitumba, second-hand clothes*); in South Africa, the term is often used with explicit reference to East Africa.

## 7 Grammar

The following grammar tendencies are not restricted to EAFE and can also be found in other parts of Africa and beyond, not only in so-called New Englishes but even in some first-language varieties in Britain, America, or Australia. Partly, at least, Englishes all seem to develop in a similar direction, as for instance in terms of simplification and regularization. Frequency, consistency, systematicity, and the developmental, regional, and social distribution of features over various spoken and written text types are a matter for further research, as are implicational hierarchies in frequency and acceptability.

As far as the verb phrase is concerned, the following 12 tendencies may be the most common, even in educated EAFE:

- 1 Inflectional endings are not always added to the verb, the general, regular and unmarked forms are used instead:
  - (4) K.shs. 33,500/- was [StE were] raised during our pre-wedding. (ICE-EA: S1BCE05K)
- 2 Complex tenses tend to be avoided. This tendency occurs particularly with the past perfect and conditionals (*It would have been much better if this was done*) and is also common in less formal native-speaker usage. It affects mainly the sequence of tenses taught in school grammar, particularly in the case of subordinate clauses in past contexts and when certain types of modality (especially irrealis) are expressed. Past tense forms are used less frequently to express modality than in StE (as in *I had better* or *If I went . . .*); as this is considered pedantic and typically British, *will* constructions are used instead.
- 3 Continuous forms (BE + VERB + *-ing* construction) are overused, i.e., not necessarily with StE “progressive” meanings:
  - (5) Some of us may think that women always are having a lot of things to do (ICE-EA: S1BINT13T)

## 4 Patterns and particles of phrasal/prepositional verbs vary:

(S6) . . . to send his driver to pick her at the school for a rendezvous (ICE-EA: W2F029T; for *pick up*)

## 5 Verb complementation (especially in the case of infinitives and gerunds) varies freely:

(S7) he has indicated to want to stop to deliver what he has (ICE-EA: S1B031T; the context makes the meaning 'stop delivering' clear)

As far as noun phrases are concerned, the following features of African English have been found:

6 The use of *-s* plural markers is overgeneralized. This tendency is quite common in New Englishes and most instances are semantically correct, i.e., although they can be seen as collective units, several individual pieces can be distinguished, e.g., with *luggages, furnitures, firewoods, or grasses*. Sometimes this tendency conflates more or less subtle semantic differentiations in Standard English, such as between *food – foods, people – peoples*; sometimes it merely regularises (historical) morphological StE irregularities (*fishes*). East African usage basically ignores the grammatical distinction of count vs. non-count nouns, which does not always correspond to the semantic distinction anyway. In StE, plural *-s* is not added to nouns that are considered abstract or collective/mass and thus non-count (*discontents, informations*). But even in StE, some non-countables may occur in the plural in special meanings (e.g., *works*) or in stressed contexts (e.g., *experiences*); thus, differences are often a question of interpretation and frequency.

(8) These advices are coming because they've already studied all of us (ICE-EA: S1BINT12T)

## 7 Articles and other determiners tend to be omitted in front of nouns:

*I am going to church/school > post office* as an expansion.

## 8 Pronouns may be redundant, especially so-called resumptive pronouns:

(9) So human being in the first time of his existence he found that he was subjected [sic] to the work (ICE-EA: S1B004T)

9 Pronouns are not always distinguished by gender. The three possibilities of third-person singular pronouns, *he, she, it* in subject roles and *his, her, its* in possessive roles, are often used indiscriminately, especially when their pronunciation is only distinguished by one consonant, as in the case of *he* and *she*. This can be accounted for as simplification or as interference from mother tongues that do not have sex distinctions in pronouns (e.g., languages that have only one lexical class for animate or human beings in general).

10 Prepositions are underdifferentiated. The most frequent English prepositions *of* and *in* (at the expense of the more special *into*) occur significantly more frequently in EAfE (cf. Mwangi, 2003), which may be explained as a “safety strategy”; more specific prepositions (e.g., *off* or *across*) are used less often. This is sometimes considered underdifferentiation in StE, since the systems are more complex than they are in African languages. Standard prepositions tend to be chosen (e.g., *in* for *into*) and analogy plays an important role. Similarly, frequently occurring complex prepositions (like *because of*, *according to*, and *due to*) occur more frequently, while less frequently occurring and even more complex ones (like *in front of*, *in favour of*, *by means of*, *in the light of*) occur less often.

(10) many people are just coming in the country. (ICE-EA: S1A018T)

11 Adjective forms tend to be used as adverbs. The unmarked adverbial form is correct in very few cases in StE (*hard*, *first*, *high*), sometimes in certain contexts or sayings such as *take it easy*, etc.; but such unmarked forms do occur in EAfE as they do in some American and British English varieties.

12 Question tags tend to occur in invariant form:

(11) There we are, isn't it? (ICE-EA: S2B057K)

Finally, word order in EAfE is much more flexible and can be used to express emphasis and focus more readily than in StE (in this respect it can be seen as being closer to colloquial spoken English).

## 8 Discourse

Speakers' intended emphasis is difficult to judge right or wrong and is considered inappropriate only in a few cases. Often, however, the question whether an unusual construction implies special emphasis or contrast is difficult to decide.

In contrast to other New Englishes, simple reduplication for emphasis does not seem to serve this purpose, at least in educated EAfrE. But related processes do occur, for instance when a stressed reflexive pronoun is placed in front of a structure and resumed in a personal pronoun afterwards:

(12) Uh myself uh I am I started working at Muhimbili in nineteen eighty-seven (ICE-EA: S1B046T)

Topicalization through fronting and a corresponding adjustment of intonation is rare in StE, but common in many English varieties (e.g., Irish). StE has developed special forms like cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions instead, which are too complex for second-language speakers.

Similarly, in StE *never* refers to a longer period or adds special emphasis, but occasionally it may simply be used to avoid a complex *to-do* construction with *not*, as in:

- (13) Most Kenyans never hesitate to give generously to help build hospitals, schools, dispensaries. (ICE-EA: W2E018K)

Generally, the presentation of information varies considerably and the perception whether something is marked in discourse or the natural flow varies accordingly, since the optimal choice of a phrase, etc., may depend on many factors.

In African societies that maintain more links with oral tradition than European ones, it is not surprising that some discourse features are culture-specific: they are customarily used, and not really marked for the insider, but are clearly unusual for the European or other outsider. Many such culture-specific discourse features are linked to traditional African social values, including the extended family, an ethnic group, the environment, and customs.

For example, East Africans tend to greet each other elaborately, and if visitors want to make a good impression, they should follow the standard patterns of asking *How is your family, . . . your health, . . . your journey/safari*, and so on (straightforward translations from the Kiswahili *Habari ya watoto, . . . ya afya, . . . ya safari*, etc.), before launching into a direct request. This strategy is considered polite and more appropriate than toning down direct questions with mitigating constructions like *I'm terribly sorry to bother you* or *Would you mind telling me* as in StE, which are considered affected in ordinary conversation and hence not used by East Africans. Again, some code mixing is possible, with handy little words like *sawa* for "okay," *asante* (or intensified *asante sana*) for "thank you," and exclamations like *kumbe* and *kweli* to indicate surprise.

Another East African politeness strategy is to express one's sympathy with some misfortune or unlucky event, e.g., when someone is obviously tired or ill, by inserting *pole* (or intensified *pole sana*) at the beginning, middle, or end of a conversation (not to be confused with *pole pole*, which means 'slowly'). This is often translated as 'I am sorry', but becomes really untranslatable, e.g., when someone stumbles, because its use often implies some fault on the part of the speaker in StE, which is clearly not the case in EAfE (this is why it is clearly marked as an East Africanism <ea> in (14):

- (14) <ea/>Pole <ea/>sana for what befell you. (ICE-EA: W1B-SK02)

## 9 Outlook

Since gaining their independence over 40 years ago, East Africans have developed an interesting trifocal language system, where English has the widespread African language Kiswahili as a rival in top language functions in the region (and, through the Organization of African Unity, even across the

continent). Although other African languages play a role in subnational communication and influence English pronunciation, East Africa is unique among the English-speaking areas of the world because of this “diglossia,” a clear functional co-existence of languages. Interestingly enough, Kiswahili does not threaten English in the area, since its losses in national functions have by far been compensated for by the many international functions of English that have been important for East Africans since their integration into worldwide communication networks over 100 years ago. The occasional heated discussions about standards, usage, functions, and loan words can be seen in the worldwide debate about globalization, and the position of English vis-à-vis (other) African languages can oscillate between complementarity and competition (Mazrui, 2004), but global interpretations should be based on actual evidence and this what this state-of-the-art summary has tried to present. In the long tradition of African multilingualism, English has a promising future in the area, and the knowledge and appreciation of national and regional features will develop and make the diversity of East African Englishes interesting for casual users and specialized researchers alike.

See also Chapters 11, WEST AFRICAN ENGLISHES; 13, CARIBBEAN ENGLISHES; 17, VARIETIES OF WORLD ENGLISHES; 28, WORLD ENGLISHES AND DESCRIPTIVE GRAMMARS; 35, A RECURRING DECIMAL: ENGLISH IN LANGUAGE POLICY AND PLANNING; 38, LEXICOGRAPHY; 41, WORLD ENGLISHES AND CORPORA STUDIES.

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